

GENERAL NOTES.

The Little Black Rail (*Porzana jamaicensis*) at Key West, Florida. — Mr. John W. Atkins secured on March 11, 1890, an adult male of this species which he kindly gave to me. The bird in question was caught on one of the principal and most frequented wharves of the water front of the city. It was evidently migrating, and had but just arrived at the point in question in a very fatigued condition, and was observed by a passer by, trying to hide among some loosely piled brick. This person secured it easily and brought it to Mr. Atkins alive. So far as I am aware this is the first absolute record of the occurrence of this species on the Island of Key West.—W. E. D. SCOTT, *New York City*.

The Dowitcher at Ottawa.—On May 9, 1890, I shot a female *Macrorhamphus griseus* feeding in a moist meadow within a mile of this city. It is now in my collection.—GEO. R. WHITE, *Ottawa, Ontario*.

The American Barn Owl near Troy, New York. — In my collection is a specimen of *Strix pratincola* in rather dark plumage, lately received from Mr. A. E. Weinbender of West Troy, who informed me that he shot the Owl November 19, 1888, in a clump of poplar trees, where it had just been mobbed by Crows, on Weinbender's Hill, about one mile west of the Hudson River at Troy, N. Y.—AUSTIN F. PARK, *Troy, N. Y.*

Strix pratincola in Western New York. — On July 5, 1890, a live Barn Owl was captured in Buffalo in the warehouse of a large tannery close to the New York Central R. R. Station. The bird had probably entered the building during the preceding night through an open window, and failing to find the same means of exit was captured in the morning. It was a fine full-plumed male. It was kept by its captor for a number of days before it came into my possession. It is interesting to note that the few days preceding the bird's capture were very hot, and that the nights were also warm. I know of only one previous record of the capture of this Owl in Erie County, and of but few elsewhere in this region.—W. H. BERGTOLD, M. D., *Buffalo*.

A Correction.—In the current volume of 'The Auk,' page 91, Dr. R. W. Shufeldt records the capture of the Hawk Owl near Washington, D. C. The undersigned called at the studio of Mr. F. S. Webster to see the specimen, and found it to be a Short-eared Owl (*Asio accipitrinus*) instead of the above named species.—A. K. FISHER, *Washington, D. C.*

Breeding of the Pileated Woodpecker in Worcester County, Massachusetts:—In a recent paper* I noticed the fact that a few Pileated Wood-

* Notes on the Birds of Winchendon, Worcester Co., Mass. 'The Auk,' Vol. V No. 4, Oct. 1888, pp. 386-393.

peckers still linger in the northern part of Worcester County, Mass., and that a brood of young was seen there in the summer of 1887. Any doubt that may have existed as to whether these birds really breed in this region is now dispelled, for Mr. C. E. Bailey has sent me a set of four eggs which he took at Winchendon, May 17, 1890. The nest was about forty feet above the ground in a dead hemlock fully three feet through at the base and over seventy feet in height. Some photographs taken for me under Mr. Bailey's direction show that the tree stood in an opening surrounded by a dense forest of spruces. One of the Woodpeckers, sufficiently large and distinct to be easily identified with the aid of a magnifying glass, appears clinging to the trunk a few feet from the entrance to its nest. This opening, according to Mr. Bailey's description, was of sufficient size to admit the hand and arm, so that no preliminary cutting was necessary in order to reach the eggs.

When the nest was first discovered both birds were in it together, but on the following day when the eggs were taken the male was away, and did not appear until his home was invaded. He watched the movements of the enemy from a safe distance, relieving his mind, meanwhile, by "talking a good deal." The female parent, on the contrary, showed marked devotion to her eggs. After being again and again driven from the nest by violent pounding at the base of the tree, she would quickly return; and even after the eggs were removed she entered the nest and remained within for some time, peeping out every now and then as if seeking some trace of her lost treasures.

After the nest was robbed, the pair disappeared for a few days, but returned about July 1, and a week or so later (I have been unable to obtain the exact date and particulars) Mr. Bailey took a second set of four eggs from the same hole.

In the eggs of the first set incubation had progressed several days, showing that probably the full number had been laid. They measured respectively: 1.34×1.00 , 1.28×1.00 , 1.27×1.00 , and $1.22 \times .97$ inch. In shape they are full, somewhat elliptical ovate. Save that they are larger and have an even higher polish, they closely resemble the eggs of *Colaptes*, showing the same conspicuous pits or pores.—WILLIAM BREWSTER, *Cambridge, Mass.*

Melanerpes aurifrons in Young Co., Texas, in 1878.—In 'The Auk' for July, 1889 (Vol. VI, p. 238) Mr. E. M. Hasbrouck notes the northern limit of range of *Melanerpes aurifrons*. It would appear from the following extract from 'Science News' of Sept. 13, 1879, that the range of the species was considerably farther north than Eastland County in 1878.

"I have had an opportunity of noting the eastern and northern limit of the Yellow-faced Woodpecker of Texas and have found it to range considerably further north than I expected. This species first attracted my attention between Austin and San Antonio, in Comal County, and about two hundred miles from the Rio Grande. West of San Antonio it became more plentiful and seemed to be inspecting the cedar telegraph poles, with